



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-4302

June 13, 2017

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Reports have indicated that your administration is considering designating the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). While I fully support penalizing elements of the Muslim Brotherhood or certain groups that have ideological origins in the Muslim Brotherhood for their role in carrying out terrorist attacks, using the FTO designation could prove challenging. Instead, I respectfully recommend you designate and sanction those groups that have historical linkages to the Muslim Brotherhood and today promote violence or directly engage in terrorist activities under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224 of September 24, 2001.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I am deeply concerned about terrorism and violence carried out by groups that have historical linkages to the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East. However, I am also aware that certain factions of the Muslim Brotherhood embrace politics over violence. The evolution of the Muslim Brotherhood across multiple countries and political environments as well as the lack of a central command structure or consistent ideology further complicates the process of designating them as a FTO. While some may identify as members of the same global movement, Muslim Brotherhood affiliates operate independently and distinctly from one another. For instance, some groups with linkages to the MB in Syria, Libya, and Yemen appear to have connections to jihadist organizations. In the West Bank and Gaza, Hamas is a designated FTO. We know that in Egypt, terrorist organizations like The Revolution Brigade (Liwa al-Thawra) and Arms of Egypt Movement (HASM) which have their origins in the Muslim Brotherhood have claimed responsibility for recent attacks.

Conversely, the Muslim Brotherhood Tunisia, the Renaissance Party (Ennahda) repeatedly renounces violence, constructively participates in the democratically elected government and demonstrates respect for the peaceful transfer of political power. In Morocco, the Justice and Development Party (PJD) is the largest party in Parliament and is the party of the Prime Minister. In Algeria, the Movement of Society and Peace (MSP) is likely to be the largest opposition bloc in Parliament following upcoming elections in May 2017.

If the proposed FTO designation of the Muslim Brotherhood fails due to this complex landscape, then the groups with historical linkages to the Muslim Brotherhood that are terrorists could falsely claim that they are nonviolent, potentially complicating future U.S. action. Conversely, a blanket Muslim Brotherhood designation that makes no distinction between the peaceful, legitimate groups and those using terror tactics may undermine democratic processes across the region, marginalize large segments of Muslim populations, and be harmful to our ability to recruit allies in the fight against terror, thereby undermining U.S. national security interests.

Fortunately, the U.S. has other tools with which to sanction those groups that have historical linkages to the Muslim Brotherhood and today promote violence or directly engage in terrorist activities. The authorities under Executive Order 13224 grant your administration the power to levy the relevant statutory sanctions against individual entities that are engaged in terrorist activities, and to do so one by one. I believe that this route will yield your administration the desired effects while mitigating the risks associated with the FTO designation.

I commend your leadership on this important matter to U.S. national security and urge you to consider designation of those groups that have historical linkages to the Muslim Brotherhood and today promote violence or directly engage in terrorist activities pursuant to Executive Order 13224. We must not yield in our fight against terrorists. But a targeted form of designation will garner better results and avoid potential complications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ted Poe', with a stylized, wavy line extending from the end.

Ted Poe  
Member of Congress  
Texas